



APPLIED PLANNING CORPORATION

A Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business

January 9, 2013

Mr. Erik Helm, Ph.D.
Senior Economist/COR
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Mr. Helm

In response to your inquiry regarding the issue of Conflict of Interest (COI) issues as they pertain to the members of the Peer Review panel that performed the peer review of the 316(b) Existing Water Structures Stated Preference survey results. We can attest that each of the panelists as well as the technical writer are in compliance with the COI rules that appear in the current edition or 3rd Edition of the EPA Peer Review handbook. Each of the panelists was queried about any potential conflicts of interest in each of five areas as listed below. As part of our recruitment process we had conversations with each of the panelists about potential COI issues before they were accepted as members of the peer review panel and were assured by each they were in compliance with the COI clauses.

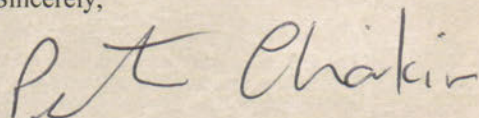
It should be noted that every member of the panel has or is currently involved in some EPA supported project. That would apply to the entire community of academic environmental economists working the US and much of Canada. Consequently we took the position that a COI would exist only in the event that a directly related EPA project could possibly impact their assessments.

COI clauses:

- a) work or arrangements concerning future work in support of industries or other parties that could potentially be affected by regulatory developments or other actions based on material presented in the document (or review materials) that you have been asked to review;
- b) your personal benefit (or benefit of your employer, spouse or dependent child) from the developments or other actions based on the document (or review materials) you have been asked to review;
- c) any previous involvement you have had with the development of the document (or review materials) you have been asked to review;
- d) any financial interest held by you (or your employer, spouse or dependent child) that could be affected by your participation in this matter; and
- e) any financial relationship you have or have had with EPA such as research grants or cooperative agreements.

I hope this addresses any conflict of interest concerns the agency may have on this matter.

Sincerely,



Peter Chaikin
VP & COO
Applied Planning Corporation